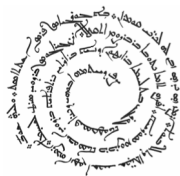


# Early Readers, Scholars and Editors of the New Testament



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# Early Readers, Scholars and Editors of the New Testament

Papers from the Eighth Birmingham  
Colloquium on the Textual Criticism of the New  
Testament

Edited by  
H. A. G. Houghton



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## INTRODUCTION

The study of the New Testament text is far broader than the reconstruction of its earliest attainable wording. As historical artefacts, manuscripts preserve information about the context in which they were produced and their use in subsequent generations, as well as pointing back towards an earlier stage in the transmission process. References made by Christian authors to the textual culture of the early Church, in addition to their biblical quotations and more general scriptural allusions, transmit information about the treatment of the documents as well as attitudes to (and the form of) the canonical text at the time. The task of the modern textual scholar is as much to map the continuity of the New Testament tradition as to reach behind it for a primitive form which was unknown to most later users.

The papers in the present volume represent the breadth of current investigations in the area of New Testament textual criticism. First, there is the study of the treatment and reception of scriptural books in the early Church. **Thomas O'Loughlin** uses a single phrase from the beginning of the Gospel according to Luke to advance a hypothesis about the production and care of biblical codices in the very earliest Christian communities. **Hans Förster** and **Ulrike Swoboda** attempt to reconstruct how the Gospel of John may have been understood in the generations immediately following its composition by examining concepts which may have posed problems for the earliest translators who produced versions in Latin and Coptic. The codification of the four gospels underlies the paper by **Satoshi Toda** on the system of concordance developed by Eusebius of Caesarea in the late third century. Toda shows how the tables found at the beginning of many gospel books, as well as the section numbers in the margins of each evangelist, can shed light on both the biblical text used by Eusebius and the exegetical presuppositions with which he worked.

Early readers also had to be textual scholars in order to establish the quality of the manuscripts they used. **Rebekka Schirner** makes a persuasive case for Augustine's text-critical abilities, which have long been eclipsed by those of his contemporary Jerome. She shows how the Bishop of Hippo applied a consistent set of criteria when faced with differing readings in biblical manuscripts, modelling the principles of responsible scholarship for his readers and listeners. **Oliver Norris's** careful study of the two principal works by the fifth-century Latin writer Sedulius suggests that for his poetic retelling of the life of Christ, the *Paschale Carmen*, Sedulius used a gospel harmony with Old Latin readings. When rewriting this in prose, as the *Paschale Opus*, he adjusted the biblical text to match Jerome's Vulgate. **Rosalind MacLachlan** provides a reintroduction to the Budapest Anonymous Commentary on Paul. Although this manuscript was copied in the late eighth century, its Old Latin text of the Epistles goes back some four hundred years earlier. This may also be the case for the exegetical comments assembled in the margins by a scholarly compiler. MacLachlan shows how the current layout of the manuscript derives from a change in format which sometimes disrupts the original conception.

Research on early readers and editions of the New Testament relies on the careful assembly and analysis of the surviving evidence. **Matthew Steinfeld** offers some preliminary reflections on his survey of Origen's citations of Galatians. He confirms that introductory formulae do not guarantee that a verbatim quotation follows, as has already been observed for other Christian authors. He also notes differences between Origen's citations of the same verse and suggests how these may be reconciled. **Amy Anderson** provides data from her transcriptions of the manuscripts of Family 1 in Mark. This early edition of the Gospels is particularly notable for its significant readings in the text and margins.

Finally, we move onto modern scholars and editors. **Hans Förster** considers the interaction between textual and literary criticism in New Testament scholarship. His comparison of the Gospel according to John with other ancient writings indicates the stability of the text, which he attributes to its early canonisation. He also looks at variations in the miracle stories and how these might be connected with an early 'signs source' proposed by literary critics. Extensive archival research by **Simon Crisp** illuminates the history of the British and Foreign Bible Society's edition of the Greek New Testament in the middle of the twentieth century. The questions and issues associated with this publication are, he suggests, common to much editorial work.

The common origin of all these contributions was the Eighth Birmingham Colloquium on the Textual Criticism of the New Testament, held in the Orchard Learning Resource Centre at the University of Birmingham from 4–6 March 2013. Although the Colloquium had a broad theme, ‘The Tradition of the Old Testament: Treasures New and Old’, the offered papers resulted in a coherent whole as shown by this volume.<sup>1</sup> An even greater range of participants attended than in previous years, representing institutions in no fewer than eight countries. As usual, guests were accommodated at Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, where the famous textual scholar and editor J. Rendel Harris was once Director of Studies. The colloquium excursion was to the city of Leicester, where we examined the Leicester Codex (GA 69) at the Public Records Office in Wigston Magna before proceeding to the city centre, visiting its Roman baths and the car park where the bones of Richard III had recently been discovered. The speaker following the conference dinner in the University’s Staff House was Mark Pallen, Professor of Microbial Genomics at the University of Birmingham: he recorded his fascinating presentation on *The Great Trees of Life: Genes, Gospels and Languages* and made it available later that evening on YouTube, where it can still be enjoyed at <http://youtu.be/8Ykj5wQs7vU>.

The proceedings of the Fifth Colloquium were published in the present series in 2008 as H.A.G. Houghton and D.C. Parker (eds), *Textual Variation: Theological and Social Tendencies?* (T&S 3.6. Piscataway NJ: Gorgias, 2008). The inaugural volume in the series with papers from the First Colloquium, first published in 1999 by the University of Birmingham Press, has also recently become available in a Gorgias Press edition, preserving the original pagination: D.G.K. Taylor (ed.), *Studies in the Early Text of the Gospels and Acts*. (T&S 3.1. Piscataway NJ: Gorgias, 2013). The Sixth Colloquium was held in London jointly with the British Library as the conference marking the launch of the Digital Codex Sinaiticus ([www.codexsinaiticus.org](http://www.codexsinaiticus.org)) in 2009. The proceedings will be published separately by the British Library. The Seventh Colloquium took place at the University of Birmingham in March 2011, on the subject of ‘Early Christian Writers and

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<sup>1</sup> The paper delivered by O’Loughlin on the chapter titles of Revelation in the Book of Armagh (VL 61) was already scheduled for publication in Pàdraic Moran and Immo Warntjes (eds), *A Festschrift for Daibhí Ó Cróinín* (Studia Traditionis Theologiae 14. Turnhout: Brepols, 2014); we are grateful to him for offering an alternative which matched the present theme.

the Text of the New Testament'. A selection of papers from this gathering are included in M. Vincent, L. Mellerin and H.A.G. Houghton (eds), *Biblical Quotations in Patristic Texts* (SP 54. Leuven: Peeters, 2013); others have been published elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> The excursion that year to Lichfield Cathedral included a visit to the Cathedral Library and a chance to see the St Chad Gospels; the conference dinner included a presentation of the newly-found Staffordshire Hoard by Dr David Symons, Curator of Antiquities and Numismatics at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery.

The editor would like to express his thanks to the contributors to this volume and all participants at the Eighth Colloquium, a gathering of friends and colleagues new and old. David Parker continues to preside and inspire as founder and co-organiser of the colloquia, while Rosalind MacLachlan, Catherine Smith, Christina Kreinecker and Alba Fedeli provided invaluable assistance before and during the conference. We are grateful to Clare Underwood for making our visit to the Public Records Office possible and to Peter Chinn for organising the accommodation at Woodbrooke. The publication of this volume in *Texts and Studies* would not have been possible without Dr Melonie Schmierer-Lee and George Kiraz of Gorgias Press. Our gratitude also goes to the Hungarian National Library (Endre Liphay, Archive of Manuscripts), the Freie Theologische Hochschule, Giessen and Cambridge University Library for permission to reproduce images of items in their collections.

H.A.G. Houghton  
Birmingham, March 2014

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<sup>2</sup> e.g. Tommy Wasserman, 'The "Son of God" was in the Beginning (Mark 1:1)' *JTS* ns 62.1 (2011) pp. 20–50; Dirk Jongkind, 'Some Observations on the Relevance of the "Early Byzantine Glossary" of Paul for the Textual Criticism of the Corpus Paulinum' *NovT* 53.4 (2011) pp. 358–75.

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANTF	Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Textforschung
AGLB	Aus der Geschichte der lateinischen Bibel
BFBS	British and Foreign Bible Society
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologicarum lovaniensium
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum series latina
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
<i>ExpT</i>	<i>Expository Times</i>
GA	Gregory–Aland (cf. Kurt Aland, <i>Kurzgefasste Liste der griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments</i> . Zweite neubearbeitete and ergänzte Auflage (ANTF 1. Berlin & New York: de Gruyter, 1994).)
GCS	Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>J ECS</i>	<i>Journal of Early Christian Studies</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament - Supplement Series
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
LSJ	H.G. Liddell, R. Scott et al., <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> . 9 <sup>th</sup> edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996).
NA27	E. Nestle, K. Aland et al., <i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> , twenty-seventh edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993.
NA28	E. Nestle, K. Aland et al., <i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> , twenty-eighth edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2012.
NHC	Nag Hammadi Codices
NHMS	Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies
<i>NovT</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>

NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
NTTSD	New Testament Tools, Studies and Documents
PL	<i>Patrologia Latina</i> [= <i>Patrologiae cursus completus: Series latina</i> ]. Edited by J.-P. Migne. 217 vols. Paris, 1841–1855.
RP	Maurice A. Robinson and William G. Pierpont, eds, <i>The New Testament in the Original Greek According to the Byzantine/Majority Textform</i> (Atlanta GA: Original Word Publishers, 1991).
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLNTGF	Society of Biblical Literature New Testament in the Greek Fathers
SD	Studies and Documents
SP	<i>Studia Patristica</i>
T&S	Texts and Studies
ThHKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
ThKNT	Theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
TR	<i>Textus Receptus</i>
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen
UBS	United Bible Societies
UP	University Press
VC	<i>Vigiliae Christianae</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

# 1. ὙΠΗΡΕΤΑΙ ... ΤΟΥ ΛΟΓΟΥ: DOES LUKE 1:2 THROW LIGHT ON TO THE BOOK PRACTICES OF THE LATE FIRST-CENTURY CHURCHES?

THOMAS O'LOUGHLIN

If we reflect on the practicalities implicit in any of the text traditions of the earliest Christian communities, we appreciate at once that there must have been systems for the preservation, copying, and diffusion of those texts. The relationship of the gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John to Mark is a case in point. Both Matthew and Luke had independent access to copies of Mark (and thus we have the Synoptic Tradition), while John also had access to Mark's account and dovetailed his own narrative with it. These patterns of use imply that in the last decades of the first century the text of Mark was being both preserved and disseminated in the churches. These same churches were also preserving and diffusing the letters of Paul after his death – and indeed adding to them – and so building up the Pauline corpus and tradition. And while we have but an indeterminate fraction of what was written by those Christians, the fact that we have as much as we do points to deliberate practices of preserving writings within the churches at a time when our evidence for formal structures within those communities is minimal.

This interaction between Jesus' early followers and written texts has long been a concern of scholarship.<sup>1</sup> Since the work of C.H. Roberts, we

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<sup>1</sup> One could argue that this is both behind all concerns about canon (so starting with Eusebius) or text (and so with Eusebius if not Origen), but I am thinking of modern concerns about books as cultural objects in a society, and works such as H.Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven and London: Yale UP, 1995).

now speak with confidence about the material form, codices, taken by those early texts.<sup>2</sup> Much attention has in recent years been devoted to the networks for their diffusion over 'the holy internet';<sup>3</sup> and this in turn has allowed us to see texts such as the gospels as having an appeal across the churches.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, the patterns of survival of those texts enable us to observe the beginnings of the processes that would eventually lead to their 'canonisation'.<sup>5</sup> That said, the emergence of the four gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John) as a distinct grouping of texts, or the gathering together of Paul's letters, with the implication that they had some special authority is perhaps better described as 'proto-canonisation' in a second-century context.<sup>6</sup> Given the obvious extent of this engagement with written texts, it is somewhat surprising that we have virtually no direct references as to how those early communities obtained, retained, duplicated, or published their books.<sup>7</sup> The only exceptions to this silence is the Deutero-Pauline reference to an exchange of letters between Colossae and Laodicea (Colossians 4:16), presumably from the later first century,<sup>8</sup> and the mention in the Pastorals of

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<sup>2</sup> C.H. Roberts, *Manuscript, Society, and Belief in Early Christian Egypt* (Oxford: The British Academy and Oxford UP, 1979).

<sup>3</sup> M.B. Thompson, 'The Holy Internet: Communication Between Churches in the First Christian Generation' in R. Bauckham (ed.), *The Gospels for All Christians* (Grand Rapids MI: Baker, 1998), pp. 49–70.

<sup>4</sup> This is the theme underlying the essays in *The Gospels for All Christians*.

<sup>5</sup> See G.N. Stanton, *Jesus and Gospel* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), pp. 63–109.

<sup>6</sup> Before we find references to 'the four gospels' as *somehow* forming a unit – which we could link with Tatian's choice of them more than a decade before Irenaeus we have the special status attributed to *both* Matthew *and* Luke in the *Protevangelium Jacobi* (see T. O'Loughlin, 'The *Protevangelium* of James: a case of gospel harmonization in the second century?' in M. Vinzent (ed.), *Studia Patristica: Papers Presented at the Sixteenth International Conference on Patristic Studies held in Oxford 2011*. (SP 65). Leuven: Peeters, 2013, pp. 165–73).

<sup>7</sup> Interestingly, very few scholars have asked who *owned* these books – despite interest in the cost of their production – and whether they were owned by individuals or communities. An exception to this is H.I. Bell and T.C. Skeat, *Fragments of an Unknown Gospel and Other Early Christian Papyri* (London: British Museum, 1935) p. 1, who pointed out that they could not be certain whether or not certain manuscripts 'were used by, and very likely written for, a Christian owner or community'.

<sup>8</sup> On the problem of the dating of Colossians, see V.P. Furnish, 'Colossians,

a concern of ‘Paul’ about his books and parchments (2 Timothy 4:13) presumably from sometime in the first-half of the second century.<sup>9</sup>

The purpose of this paper is to ‘fly a kite’ and investigate whether in Luke 1:2 we have a reference to early Christian engagement with books. I want to argue that the essential basis of the usage of books, not to mention their availability for copying and dissemination, is some structure for keeping them safe from day to day when they were not being read in the community, and that in Luke 1:2 we may have the name which designated specific officers of the churches, ‘the servants of the word’ (ὕπηρέται τοῦ λόγου), whose task it was to preserve and guard each church’s ‘library’.<sup>10</sup>

### LUKE 1:2 IN RECENT RESEARCH

Luke writes that he wants to produce in his book an ‘orderly account’ of ‘the events ... just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants (αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται) of the word.’ The word ‘eyewitnesses’ has caught the attention of exegetes, while ‘servants’, the other term, has most commonly been seen as simply a clarification of their authority: they are ministers in the process of the *kerygma*. Those followers who were eyewitnesses from the beginning are indeed the servants of the word and, as such, it is what these eyewitnesses have handed on to writers such as Luke that forms the basis of his gospel.<sup>11</sup> At the core of the current lively debate over these ‘eyewitnesses’ (who are the focus of all attention) is whether or not they should be seen as simply firsthand observers of the events surrounding Jesus of Nazareth: they are the primary historical witnesses.<sup>12</sup> Their testimony builds the essential

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Epistle to the’ in D.N. Freedman (ed.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. (New York NY: Anchor, 1992), I, pp. 1090–6 at pp. 1094–5.

<sup>9</sup> See T.C. Skeat, “‘Especially the parchments’: A note on 2 Timothy IV.13.” *JTS* ns 30 (1979) pp. 173–7. On the date of the Pastorals, see A. Yarbro Collins, ‘The Female Body as Social Space in 1 Timothy’ *NTS* 57 (2011) pp. 155–75.

<sup>10</sup> The first person to suggest some link between ὑπηρέται and a church’s ‘library’ was J.N. Collins, ‘Re-thinking “Eyewitnesses” in the Light of ‘Servants of the Word’ (Luke 1:2)’ *ExpT* 121 (2010) pp. 447–52, at p. 452.

<sup>11</sup> See R. Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony* (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 2006). This work has generated a large body of discussion; see, for example, J.C.S. Redman, ‘How accurate are eyewitnesses? Bauckham and the eyewitnesses in the light of psychological research’ *JBL* 129 (2010) pp. 177–97.

<sup>12</sup> Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, p. 117.

bridge between 'the Jesus of history' and 'the Christ of faith'; so it is appropriate that Luke should designate them as 'the servants of the word'. As such, the 'eyewitnesses' and the 'servants' are clearly one group.<sup>13</sup>

The rationale for Bauckham's position on the identity of the two groups may be new, but the conclusion is not. Michael Goulder sees both groups as Luke's 'tradents' and notes:

The Greek requires a single group with a double function: those like Peter, who both accompanied with the Lord through the ministry, and witnessed to the fact thereafter in preaching.<sup>14</sup>

On this reading it is useless to imagine that there can be any specific group of ὑπηρέται because it is but an aspect of being the living link from Luke's time back to the events. Moreover, these 'ministers of the word' have a distinct theological identity:

The Gospel ... fulfils the word of God in the Old Testament, and it was handed down to the present Church by men who saw it all from the beginning, and also preached it. 'Ministers of the word' may include an element of seeing the events as fulfilments as well as proclaiming them as facts: only so, in Luke's understanding, do they become 'the word (of God)'.<sup>15</sup>

Thus Goulder arrives at what has been the most widespread view of the passage: these servants/ministers are to be seen in terms of a ministry of preaching, and this ministry in the church is the sort of high status activity imagined in such passages as the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19. They are 'servants' of the church in a manner analogous to that of Paul and Barnabas taking the gospel into new situations, or, for that matter, later clerical preachers who viewed themselves as 'ministers of the gospel'.

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<sup>13</sup> Bauckham, *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses*, p. 122.

<sup>14</sup> M.D. Goulder, *Luke. A New Paradigm*. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1989), p. 201.

<sup>15</sup> Goulder, *Luke*, p. 201; J.A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke I-IX* (New York NY: Doubleday, 1981), p. 294 is explicit that γένομενοι should be rendered 'becoming' which then is both the basis and conclusion of his argument; most interpreters and translators have opted for the simpler solution of rendering it as 'being' (but Bauckham does consider the possibility that 'the eyewitnesses' later on became 'the servants of the word').

A slightly more nuanced position can be found in Joseph Fitzmyer's commentary which acknowledges that 'the Greek of this phrase is not easily translated' and that the 'problem lies in whether Luke is referring here to one or to two groups ... who shaped the early tradition.'<sup>16</sup> In contrast to those who think that two groups are mentioned, Fitzmyer believes that the key lay in the 'single art[icle] *hoi* which governs the whole construction'. From this base he held that one should understand the sentence as 'the 'eyewitnesses' of [Jesus'] ministry ... who eventually became the 'ministers of the word'.<sup>17</sup> While he acknowledged that 'Luke is distancing himself from the ministry of Jesus by two layers of tradition', Fitzmyer is clear that what is involved is a single body of people, and their service is to be understood in evangelical terms: they preached God's word.

This consensus that 'eyewitnesses' and 'servants of the word' are identical (both as human beings and with regard to task) has recently been challenged by John N. Collins, who responding to Bauckham,<sup>18</sup> argues that this 'commonly accepted understanding, ... can now be seen as a misconception'.<sup>19</sup> His argument begins by noting that:

... of the 57 instances [in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*] of *autopt-* prior to 100 CE, 54 instances occur in context with some form of *gignesthai* ... Exactly the same pattern repeats in 200 instances (over and above citations of Luke's phrase in Christian writers) over the next 400 years. On the other hand, no instance of such a pairing (other than at Luke 1:2) occurs in the case of the Greek servant word (*hypéret-*).<sup>20</sup>

Collins having thus dismissed the notion of some historical progression (implicitly replying to Fitzmyer), now thinks of a single group of human beings but with two functions: they have the twin tasks of eyewitnessing the word (Collins points out that 'eyewitness' has no forensic connotation in Greek; so perhaps a better rendering of his meaning would be 'being observers') and being servants of the word:

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<sup>16</sup> Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke I-IX*, p. 294.

<sup>17</sup> Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke I-IX*, p. 294; who based his conclusion on the work of R.J. Dillon, *From Eyewitnesses to Ministers of the Word* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1978), pp. 269–72.

<sup>18</sup> Collins writes: 'Bauckham (p. 122) agrees, as perhaps most do, that the two designations apply to one group of people.' ('Re-thinking "Eyewitnesses"', p. 450).

<sup>19</sup> Collins, 'Re-thinking "Eyewitnesses"', p. 450.

<sup>20</sup> Collins, 'Re-thinking "Eyewitnesses"', p. 450.

So we have an eyewitnessing function 'of the word' as well as a distinct function of being servant 'of the word'.<sup>21</sup>

Collins also makes another significant observation: Luke's 'focus in his preface is upon a literary tradition'. While Luke's gospel was written in an oral environment,<sup>22</sup> Luke is concerned with earlier written materials, i.e. books, and the place they hold in the communities' memory.<sup>23</sup> This allows Collins to note that the moment of writing narratives is one event, but there is a subsequent reception and use of those books in the communities: here lies the role of the αὐτόπται καὶ ὑπηρέται γινόμενοι τοῦ λόγου in that they receive and read the narratives aloud in the community.<sup>24</sup>

This view is considerably different to that of earlier writers, and indeed Bauckham, in that we are now dealing with a group of functionaries in the churches, who are not only after the historical time of the events surrounding Jesus but also of the time when these events appeared as narratives in writing (a time which for Luke must be after the time of Mark, since we can be certain that Mark's narrative is one of those accounts). So, for Collins, these officials of the community, with the double name, are 'responsible for the library of the community' and, more significantly, for:

receiving and authenticating documents of the tradition. They are highly literate and have received their appointments from the community.<sup>25</sup>

As such they fulfil a role of being guarantors of the assurance (ἀσφάλεια) of the treatises (λόγοι) with which Theophilus has been instructed (Luke

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<sup>21</sup> Collins, 'Re-thinking "Eyewitnesses"', p. 450.

<sup>22</sup> Although Luke was concerned with books, he was dealing with them in an oral environment in which the book is more akin to a modern recording of a voice speaking, than a book as we conceive it which communicates from mind to mind without sounds being heard; see P.J. Achtemeier, 'Omne verbum sonat: The New Testament and the Oral Environment of Late Western Antiquity' *JBL* 109 (1990) pp. 3–27.

<sup>23</sup> This significant observation picks up a theme that was common in older scholarship that emphasised the place of the book, as such, in Luke's thinking (e.g. E.J. Goodspeed, 'Some Greek Notes – I. Was Theophilus Luke's Publisher?' *JBL* 73 (1954) p. 84); and for a more recent view of the matter, see L. Alexander, 'Ancient Book Production and the Circulation of the Gospels' in R. Bauckham (ed.), *The Gospels for All Christians*, pp. 71–105, at pp. 103–5.

<sup>24</sup> Collins, 'Re-thinking "Eyewitnesses"', p. 451.

<sup>25</sup> Collins, 'Re-thinking "Eyewitnesses"', p. 452.

1:4).<sup>26</sup> So both Collins and Bauckham agree that this single group has the task of being ‘specially authorised guarantors of the traditions’;<sup>27</sup> they are the representative and responsible tradents. Yet while Collins begins with the assertion of two tasks, these are not clearly delimited in his article and seem to be indistinguishable in practice.

### ANOTHER FORMULATION OF THE EVIDENCE

Collins’ work marks a definite advance on earlier exegesis in that (1) it clarifies the focus of Luke on *the written materials* already in existence at his time, and (2) proposes a distinction, at least conceptually, between αὐτόπται and ὑπηρέται. However, with regard to the latter point Collins does not draw out how these ‘dual functions’ are actually different in the life of the community. Being ‘a witness and a servant of the word’ seems to amount to belonging to the same group and doing the same thing: ‘as well as handling the material [i.e. the books], they also taught it’.<sup>28</sup> So is this simply a hendiadys?<sup>29</sup>

Against this suggestion is the clear point that ‘being observers’/ ‘eyewitnessing’, or even reading the word is distinct from being ‘servants of the word’ when we note that this servant-word, ὑπηρέτ-, is usually linked not with a notion of ‘minister’ (in the modern sense of a ‘minister of religion’) but that of a minor practical functionary.<sup>30</sup> The ὑπηρέται, Collins has shown elsewhere,<sup>31</sup> were functionaries that dealt with practical matters of commerce; they are the clerks and officials that put into effect the instructions of others who are their superiors. They are, by analogy, those one meets when one goes to a modern office with a query rather than those

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<sup>26</sup> Collins’ translation is worth noting: ‘that you [Theophilus] may learn to have a deeper appreciation of the treatises about which you have been instructed’ (‘Re-thinking “Eyewitnesses”’, pp. 452).

<sup>27</sup> Collins quoting Bauckham.

<sup>28</sup> Collins, ‘Re-thinking “Eyewitnesses”’, p. 452.

<sup>29</sup> So thought B. Gerhardsson, *Memory and Manuscript* (Lund: Gleerup, 1961) pp. 234–5, who compared it to another, ‘service and apostleship’, in Acts 1:25; we should add the references to ‘bishops and deacons’ in Philippians 1:1 and *Didache* 15.1.

<sup>30</sup> Collins, ‘Re-thinking “Eyewitnesses”’, p. 451, points out that ‘*hypéretés* is, in fact, a term with a well established place in bureaucratic usage for minor officials.’

<sup>31</sup> J.J. Collins, *Diakonia: Re-interpreting the Ancient Sources*. (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1990), pp. 83, 94, 125, 153, 166–7, 174, 183, 314, and 320.

‘in charge’ or those ministers that one sees in the pulpit. This notion of ὑπηρετής referring to a functionary assisting someone else is consistent with its use in Jewish writings be they prior to or roughly contemporaneous with Luke (e.g. Josephus).<sup>32</sup> Moreover, when we look at its usage in the New Testament two points stand out. First, ὑπηρετής designates *lesser* officials, usually within some power pyramid. A clear case of this is Matthew 5:25 where ‘the judge hands over to the guard’ (μήποτε σε παραδῶ ὁ ἀντίδικος τῷ κριτῇ καὶ ὁ κριτὴς τῷ ὑπηρέτῃ) and where the story’s rhetoric assumes that one knows that one is descending from the judge to the ὑπηρετής and thence to prison. This would be true whether the usage is ‘factual’ (e.g. Mark 14:54) or ‘imaginary’ (e.g. John 18:36 – the angelic army are Jesus’ operatives, not his equals).<sup>33</sup> Second, there is no specifically cultic or religious range to the word. One might argue that 1 Corinthians 4:1 (where Paul, Apollos and Cephas are to be thought of as ὡς ὑπηρεταὶ Χριστοῦ) is an exception, but this fails to see the point Paul is making: these named people, himself included, are to be seen as lesser officials carrying out the work of the Christ, and they should be seen as functionaries for him despite being designated ‘apostles’. Equally, when in Acts 26:16 Paul is appointed to be a ὑπηρετὴς καὶ μάρτυς of Jesus, the point of the story is to express the fact that Paul is the functionary of Jesus in what he does.

So the notion that αὐτόπται and ὑπηρεταὶ form a hendiadys does not take account of the lowliness of ὑπηρεταὶ, while, if it is the case that the αὐτόπται have some specific function in the churches of being the performers or guarantors ‘of the word’, then it is most unlikely that they would also be the ὑπηρεταὶ. The implication seems clear: not only do these officials belong to the time between the arrival of written accounts of Jesus and Luke’s time, but they are two distinct groups in the church. Read in this way there was not one group in the communities,<sup>34</sup> but those who witnessed to the orderly accounts in the churches – presumably with high

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<sup>32</sup> See K.H. Rengsdorf, ‘ὑπηρετὴς κτλ.’ in G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 1972), VIII, pp. 530–9.

<sup>33</sup> See also Matt. 26:58; Mark 14:65; John 7:32 and 45; 18:3 and 12; 19:6; Acts 5:22 and 26. This point was also made by Rengsdorf in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, VIII, pp. 539–42.

<sup>34</sup> We might recall that both αὐτόπται and ὑπηρεταὶ were the same individuals was the one element common to the positions of Rengsdorf (p. 543), Fitzmyer, Goulder, Bauckham, and Collins.

literary skills (as Collins suggests) and who gave voice to those texts by reading them aloud – and a group of *lesser* officers (ὕπηρέται) who were more concerned with the practicalities of having ‘orderly narratives’ in the community, kept them safe, brought them out at their gatherings, and made sure that they were preserved. Both together were needed to allow for the word to be heard in the churches, and to ensure that these accounts, such as Mark (and Q, if that was some sort of written document), were available to someone like Luke who was about to write his own orderly account.

We noted earlier that if ὕπηρέται was to be rendered as ‘ministers’<sup>35</sup> then we tend to think of someone like ‘the minister in the pulpit’; whereas it would be better to think in terms of them being ‘office assistants’. Now I would like to refine the simile: if the αὐτόπται are the lectors to the community and had some significant function such as selecting what was read, then ὕπηρέται should be imagined as similar to those lesser officers in a community, perhaps called ‘sacristans’ or ‘vergers’, who look after the practicalities of the cult.

However, before exploring this further, I want to express my debt to Collins’ article. It is there that the notion that the αὐτόπται and ὕπηρέται are officers within the Christian community, and that Luke is familiar with them as such, is first made. However, for both Collins and Bauckham these αὐτόπται have an authorizing, and guaranteeing function. Collins thinks of them as ‘authenticating documents of the tradition’. This notion seems a little wide of the mark: we have no evidence whatsoever of any system of these tasks; and if there were such a system then the tasks of those who were later arguing for a ‘canon’ would have been much easier.<sup>36</sup> In fact, our evidence points overwhelmingly towards the conclusion that there was nothing like a system of ‘authorization’ in the early communities.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> So Douay-Rheims, Authorised Version, and RSV; following the usage of the Vulgate: *ministri*.

<sup>36</sup> Both Bauckham and Collins (despite his warning note) seem to have exported the forensic overtones of ‘eyewitness’ in our usage into Greek; moreover, Collins earlier in his article dwells on the question of authority as exercised by the Vatican’s doctrinal watchdogs (under a variety of names) and seems to have imagined that there was a similar concern for ‘authorised’ texts in the early churches.

<sup>37</sup> See W. Bauer (trans. R.A. Kraft and G. Krodel), *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity*. (Philadelphia PA: Fortress Press, 1961) [English translation of *Rechtgläubigkeit und Ketzerei in ältesten Christentum*, Tübingen: Mohr, 1934].

## Ὑπηρεῖται: A JOB SPECIFICATION?

At this point we should turn our attention to other references to a ὑπηρετής found in Luke. The first occurs in Luke's depiction of Jesus going to the synagogue in Nazareth. When he stood up to read, he was given (by whom it is not stated, but presumably this was the same person to whom Jesus returned the scroll)<sup>38</sup> the scroll of Isaiah. He read, rolled up the scroll again, gave it back to the attendant (τῷ ὑπηρετῇ),<sup>39</sup> and sat down (4:20). Commentators usually point out that this assistant was but one of a range of synagogue officials mentioned by Luke: there are also the ἀρχισυνάγωγος (8:49 and 13:14) and πρεσβυτέραι (7:3).<sup>40</sup> That the ὑπηρετής was the lesser official, dealing with the liturgical practicalities would fit what we know of the word's range of meanings from elsewhere. This has led Fitzmyer to see this person as 'the *hazzan*' and describe him as 'a sort of sacristan or sexton'; while Rengsdorf has noted that there is a burial plaque to one Flavios Julianos, a ὑπηρετής, who was apparently a synagogue official.

However, if we shift our attention from the scene in the story to that of its narration we have, very probably, a scene with which Luke's audience were themselves familiar. The prophets were being read in their assembly and there too the gospel was being proclaimed sometimes by an evangelist, but probably more often by someone else – we might adopt Collins' suggestion of the literate αὐτόπται – giving sound to marks on papyrus. That person had to be provided with the book, and the book had to be preserved afterwards. The ὑπηρετής of the story set in Nazareth is a reflection of the tasks performed by the ὑπηρετής in the Christian community. If that is the case, then the similarity of scene would be theologically significant within Luke's view of history: the risen Christ is imagined to be present in that community hearing the story just as he was recalled as being present in the Nazareth synagogue.

That ὑπηρετής was a specifically Christian term for Luke is supported by his non-use of the term in 12:58. While Matthew (5:25) reads ὁ κριτής

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<sup>38</sup> A point made by Rengsdorf in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, VIII, p. 540, n. 80.

<sup>39</sup> 'Attendant' is found in RSV and NRSV; older translations echo the Vulgate's use of *minister*.

<sup>40</sup> Rengsdorf, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, VIII, p. 540, n. 80; and Fitzmyer, *The Gospel according to Luke I-IX*, p. 533.